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THE VIRGINIA BAPTIST
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
RICHMOND, VA.

THE
JOURNAL OF THE
ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE

1875

THE VIRGINIA
Baptist Education Society.

THE SOCIETY—
THE SEMINARY—
THE COLLEGE.

THE VIRGINIA BAPTIST
HISTORICAL SOCIETY
RICHMOND, VA.

AN ADDRESS

BY

ROBERT RYLAND, D. D.

INTRODUCTION BY CHARLES H. RYLAND, D. D.

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AUTHORIZATION.

THE Trustees of Richmond College having been informed that the Committee on Commencement, the Society of Alumni and the Faculty proposed to invite the venerable and distinguished ex-president of the College to deliver, in June, 1890, an address on the early days of the Institution, adopted the following:

"Resolved, That we have heard with sincere pleasure of the suggestion of our representatives providing for an historical address by Rev. Robert Ryland, D. D., at the approaching Commencement, and hereby cordially approve their action in the premises.

"Resolved, That we invite Dr. Ryland to be the guest of the corporation at the time of his visit, and the treasurer be directed to meet his expenses."

On the 18th of June, while in annual session, the Board received their guest and his honored wife in the Jeter Memorial Hall, and through their President extended the courtesies and hospitalities of the College in an appropriate and handsome manner.

The address was delivered in the chapel at 8 o'clock P. M., under the auspices of the Society of Alumni, before a large and cultivated audience.

At a meeting of the Trustees June 19th it was—

"Resolved, That we heard with rare pleasure the address of Rev. Robert Ryland, D. D., and believing it to be a valuable contribution, not only to the history of this Institution, but to the cause of education in Virginia, respectfully request the manuscript for publication.

"Resolved, That the Secretary be directed to carry out the wishes of the Board, and to issue and distribute the address in an appropriate and permanent form."

INTRODUCTION.

CHARLES H. RYLAND, D. D.

THE Baptists of Virginia began early to agitate the question of founding a school of high grade to be under denominational control. The history of the movement divides itself into three distinct periods. The first embraces the eventful years from 1788 to 1809, inclusive; the second, the interesting epoch from 1813 to 1830, and the third the decade from 1830 to 1840. The latter year witnessed the incorporation and successful establishment of Richmond College.

A review of the events which led up to the full realization of the hopes of our people for a stable institution, with the highest legislative sanction and power, cannot fail of a very deep interest to the present generation. I have gathered the facts from official sources, and offer them as an introduction to the valuable and interesting address which follows.

1788.

From "A History of the Rise and Progress of the Baptists of Virginia, by Robert B. Semple, Richmond, 1810," we learn that the first public mention of the subject of founding such an institution was at a meeting of the "General Committee," held at Dupuy's Meeting-House, August 11, 1788. Delegates from five Baptist Associations were present, making the meeting largely representative. Dr. Semple says (page 78), "On examining the papers directed to the General Committee at this session it was found that a letter was received from Rev. James Manning, president of Providence College in Rhode Island, recommending and encouraging the Baptists of Virginia to erect a seminary of learning."

The suggestion met with prompt approval, and it was—

"*Resolved*, That a committee of five persons, on each side of James river, be appointed to forward the business respecting a seminary of learning."

"Accordingly, Samuel Harriss, John Williams, Eli Clay, Simeon Walton, and David Barrow were appointed from the south, and Robert Carter, John Waller, William Fristoe, John Leland, and Reuben Ford on the north side of said river."

This was an energetic and promising start, but apart from, perhaps, a yearly mention of the matter, to secure continuance (pp. 85-86), no definite steps were taken till 1793, when "the business respecting a seminary of learning was committed to the hands of Rev. John Williams and Mr. Thomas Read, of Charlotte, who reported the following plan: That fourteen trustees be appointed, all of whom shall be Baptists; that these, at their first meeting, appoint seven others of some other religious denomination; that the whole twenty-one then form a plan and

make arrangements for executing it." "This scheme was proceeded in so far as to appoint the whole of the trustees, who had one or two meetings in which advances were made toward maturing the plan. But apprehensive that they should not be able to procure sufficient funds, with some other discouragements, they finally abandoned it."

That the Baptists of the State, then rising into such prominence, were put into a false position by this failure and subjected themselves to criticism, may be inferred from an incident gathered from the same history. (See pp. 88 and 245.) In May, 1807, a prominent minister of another denomination published in his church paper an "illiberal assertion" that the Baptists of his neighborhood held that "human learning is of no use." "This calumny" was taken up both by the General Committee of Correspondence and the Roanoke District Association, and an "answer which was strong and energetic, composed by Mr. Kerr, was printed."

As an outgrowth of this evidently incorrect charge, the question, which began to be talked about twenty years before, was again revived. Our historian tells us (p. 89), "The next General Meeting of Correspondence was holden at Tarwallet Meeting-House October 28, 1809. Delegates from five Associations assembled." "Two subjects were brought forward at this meeting which, if ever matured, must greatly conduce to the future happiness of the Baptists as a religious society: The religious education of children, and the establishment of some seminary or public school to assist young preachers to acquire literary knowledge. The first was disposed of by recommending to parents the use of catechisms, and especially one lately published for the use of the Baptist Society; and the other, by appointing two persons to acquire information and digest a plan for such a seminary."

Here Semple's history closes. It was published the following year, and no one has arisen to take up the work where he left it. We cannot tell what became of the educational question. We may only infer that no practical result was reached. Of the difficulties which beset the paths of our fathers we know but little, and consequently are not prepared to pass judgment upon their seeming irresolution in so important a matter.

1813.

Columbian College, in the District of Columbia, was founded in 1822.

The circumstances of its origin and early growth naturally become links in the chain of historic accuracy upon this subject. Allusion to them here is due the Virginia Baptists of that day, for it is evident that the planting and fostering of a College so close to their own borders, under the auspices which marked the enterprise, largely explain the continued inaction of the denomination with regard to a school of their own.

The return of Luther Rice from India in 1813 was the occasion of a wide awakening upon the subject of Foreign Missions. This awakening resulted in the formation, in the subsequent year, of the General Convention, which drew all the States into sympathetic co-operation. Great enterprises sprang into being. The American Bible Society, the American Tract Society, the Newton Theological Seminary and Columbian College were organized in the interests of an educated ministry and a wider evangelism. The location of a college in the city of Washington at once commended itself to the denomination in Virginia, and they became its earnest friends. Three of its leading ministers, Semple, Ball and Clopton, became enthusiastic agents. For a number of years liberal means and patronage were fur-

nished by our people, and, in return, from its halls were received a large number of well-trained men, who became eminent citizens and able ministers of Jesus Christ. Among these was the distinguished alumnus who became the President of the Virginia Seminary, and afterward of the College. The pages of this publication furnish abundant proof of the attachment of our people to Columbian College, and their dependence upon it, even after they determined to have a school of their own.

1830.

This brings us to the consummation. The period for decided action, looking to a local organization for the education of the ministry, had at last arrived. The facts are given not with the slightest wish to anticipate the Address that follows, and which, it will be seen, they corroborate, but for the purpose of placing within the reach of those interested a full and exact account.

From the records of the Virginia Baptist Education Society, which have been preserved, the following is quoted :

"At a numerous meeting of brethren held at the Second Baptist Church, in the city of Richmond, June 8th, 1830, at 5 o'clock A. M., for devising and proposing some plan for the improvement of young men who, in the judgment of their churches, are called to the work of the ministry; Elder John Kerr was called to the chair, and Elder James B. Taylor appointed secretary. Elder James Fife prayed. After several addresses, explanatory of the design of the meeting, the following resolutions were adopted :

"*Resolved*, That it is expedient that the Baptists of this State form an Education Society for the improvement of the ministry.

"*Resolved*, That a committee, consisting of brethren Edward Baptist, William F. Broadus, Jeremiah B. Jeter, Henry Keeling and James B. Taylor, be appointed to draw up a plan and report to-day at 2 o'clock."

The following is the report :

"The committee appointed to recommend a plan for the formation of an Education Society, under the direction and control of the Baptists in this State, for the improvement of the ministers of the denomination, submit the following report :

"Although it would probably be unadvisable at the present time to attempt the establishment of a seminary of learning, with a location and a name, yet it is believed that measures may be adopted for gradually carrying into effect the object proposed.

"For the success of the Columbian College in its efforts to be relieved from its pecuniary embarrassments and for its extended and permanent usefulness, the deepest interest ought to be cherished and manifested both by our contributions and our prayers. Nor is it conceived that the plan now proposed will, in any manner, injuriously affect that institution, unless, indeed, the improvement of the ministerial qualifications of our ministry can produce such a result. It is believed that in the incipient state and early progress of the concern, something, yea, under the blessing of God, much may be done, on a very economical plan.

"In some instances beneficiaries may be placed in the families of experienced ministering brethren, whose education, libraries, and opportunities to give useful instruction may enable them to render essential service to their younger brethren, while the field of labor in the adjacent country may be such as to employ the gifts of the beneficiaries in preaching to churches and congregations willing to contribute by subscriptions, produce and clothing for their partial or entire support.

Our churches are blessed with many young brethren whose gifts are already useful, and are calculated to be made more extensively useful. There are instances in which it would be impracticable for such brethren to enter upon an extensive course of study, even though facilities presented themselves whereby their expenses could be met. Nevertheless, their own consciousness of the disadvantages under which they must labor, with their present limited attainments, amongst churches and in society so improved as this age presents, hinders both their success and their labor.

"It appears, therefore, to be our duty to recommend nothing more nor less than the formation of an Education Society and the adoption of suitable measures for forthwith obtaining funds for the assistance of such brethren as have been alluded to, and whose means do not allow them opportunity for the improvement of their gifts and the increase of their knowledge—for their assistance, either by putting them in some seminary of learning or by placing them under the instruction of one or more judicious ministering brethren."

They then recommended a constitution for the Society, of which the following articles were the essential features:

"I. This Society shall be called the Virginia Baptist Educational Society.

"II. The design of this Society is to afford brethren of the Baptist denomination regularly licensed to the work of the ministry, who give satisfactory evidence of their piety, good standing, call to the ministry, and capacity for improvement and usefulness, the means of acquiring knowledge to enable them with greater success to preach the gospel of Christ."

The report was unanimously adopted, and it was determined to commence work at once.

Full details of the persistent efforts of the wise and good leaders of that day to carry out long-cherished plans, the difficulties of the undertaking, and its gradual rise to success and permanence, could be given from the records of the Society and the College. Some day such a history may be called for. For the present it is a matter of congratulation that the College was able to secure from one who was the chief actor in this remarkable work for more than thirty years, the essential features of a story which is of undying interest to Virginia Baptists.

It cannot be inappropriate to conclude by reverting to the fact that Richmond College, as it stands to-day, is the child of the faith, prayers and gifts of Virginia Baptists, aided of late years by a few generous friends from beyond our borders. The wise and steady purpose of its founders, their love and devotion, are its rich heritage. It quietly holds to the work for which it was created, and covets no higher honor than to promote Christian education. One-third of its students every year are preparing to preach the gospel; two-thirds are aiming by thorough equipment to serve God in spheres but little inferior in dignity and usefulness. Its influence is felt in every calling and in every clime. Truly may it be said, our fathers builded better than they knew. Let their children cherish the Institution, guard its interests, guide its mission, equip it for yet broader work, and hand it down to other generations luminous with the religion of Jesus Christ, that it may continue to bless the world.

ADDRESS.

REV. ROBERT RYLAND, D. D.

The subject of Education is at all times interesting to the patriot and to the Christian. It constitutes the radical distinction between the civilized and the savage. It is, therefore, the duty of every one, first to cultivate his own mind, and then to help others in the same important object.

On the 8th of June, 1830, some of the leading Baptists of Virginia met together in the Second Baptist Church of this city to devise means for the improvement of our rising ministry, and through them the elevation of our people generally. There were two plans suggested for consideration. One was to raise funds for the maintenance of young men in schools already established. Suppose, for example, a thousand dollars could be collected in a year, and that ten young men were in need of help. Some of these might go to the primary school, others to the private academy, others to the college, and others to the University of Virginia. There would be no need of buildings, professors, apparatus, libraries, or endowments. All the business would be the appointment of an agent to collect funds, and of a committee to look out for suitable candidates, to ascertain their relative culture, and to arrange for their reception into the several institutions to which they might be adapted and which might be accessible. This plan would bring the outlay of means to bear directly on the minds of the recipients without costly machinery. It was believed that many private schools and academies would, for such a class of pupils, reduce their terms of board and tuition to a very low figure, and that the colleges, always anxious for numbers and always encouraged by patronage, would be especially accommodating. The Columbian College had

not long been established in the District of Columbia, with the express design of educating candidates for the ministry. Its location was convenient to the State; its Faculty was in cordial sympathy with our principles; the educating influence of the general government would be highly beneficial to the young men; it would be a vast saving to utilize the institution for our purposes, while the College itself would be at once raised to a higher sphere of usefulness.

The arguments against this plan were, that students, scattered among various schools, would lose the advantage of fraternal intercourse; that our boys were not generally prepared for college; that we had little voice in controlling the school in Washington; that its finances had been unwisely managed, and were even then in a tangled condition; that a home school in our midst, subject to our control, with pupils among us and around us, would excite the enthusiasm of our people and lead to more useful results. I need not say that these arguments prevailed, though few of their advocates probably anticipated their long train of consequences. I must add that I was intensely solicitous that the other plan should be adopted; but being the young pastor of a weak church, and void of influence in Baptist councils, I was voted down. The Northern Baptist Education Society afterwards adopted this plan. They have never expended a dollar in bricks and mortar, have not built a school, or hired a teacher, or raised an endowment. They have simply collected funds, selected pupils, and sent them, with various degrees of pecuniary help, to schools and colleges and theological seminaries already in active operation.

Having formed the Virginia Baptist Education Society, they placed a few young men with Rev. Edward Baptist, of Powhatan county, for instruction, and with a godly matron for board. He was an educated minister and a competent teacher; but with a large farm and several important churches to supervise, he found little time for training, systematic work. The "boys" were more occupied with prayer-meetings and revival-services than with their books in the class-room.

Having resolved to locate the school, the Society purchased "Spring Farm,"* five miles from the city of Richmond, near Young's

*Now Bloomingdale Stock Farm, at the head of the Hermitage Road.—C. H. R.

Mill, for \$4,000, and there, on the 1st day of July, 1832, opened "The Virginia Baptist Seminary." They determined to combine with study a system of manual labor, thus improving the health, diminishing the expenses, and perhaps guarding the humility of the young preachers. They hired a gardener, bought utensils, built workshops, secured a market-cart, and prescribed three hours' work daily to the students.

The records of the Society will show that I was elected Principal of the school during the preceding spring. It may appear inconsistent to have consented to take charge of a concern which was set on foot against my earnest protest. My defence is this: I was brought up at the feet of Robert B. Semple, who used to say at Associations, when *his* measures were rejected—an event which seldom occurred—"Well, brethren, if you won't adopt my plans, I'll help you carry out yours." The whole machinery of government, political, ecclesiastical, domestic, and collegiate, is based on the principle of compromise.

The manual-labor system conciliated public sentiment, and was cheerfully submitted to by the pupils; but a fair and faithful experiment of more than three years proved its inexpediency. Tools to be used three hours a day cost as much as if they were in constant service; handled by inexperienced operators, they not only yielded a smaller profit, but they were more frequently destroyed, than if handled by the skillful. The profits of one session sometimes came in during the following session, when new laborers had come in and old ones had gone out, thus making the division complicated and inconvenient. As all the workers left in the summer vacation, the farming and gardening interests suffered by neglect at that season beyond the possibility of recovery. But the most serious objection to the system was, that the cost of a suitable manager of this department either consumed all the earnings of the students, thus making them reluctant to work, or too large a part of the funds contributed by the public for education in a higher sense. For these reasons the working feature of our enterprise was adjudged unprofitable, and by common consent was laid aside. I take great pleasure in adding that the Miller School, in Albemarle, long afterwards established on this principle, has proved a grand success; but it has a princely endowment, and the mechanical and agricul-

tural departments are kept up throughout the year without a general vacation.

On the 4th of July, 1832, I began a regular course of teaching at the Institution. I laid down the principle that Latin, Greek, Mathematics, and an acquaintance with our own language were the chief elements of a solid education; and in every case where youth was not too far spent I prescribed that course. This idea was kept prominent in all the early struggles of the Seminary. We carried the pupils as far as we could with a small corps of teachers, and encouraged them to prosecute and finish a higher course in schools which had full faculties. Some of the brethren, of maturer minds and limited means, felt constrained to enter the ministry with the measure of preparation which the Seminary furnished. They have, in most cases, been signally blessed in their work. Others, going through our course, repaired to colleges and generally obtained diplomas.

Among the first pupils, I recall the names of Joseph Walthall, A. P. Repiton, Richard Herndon, J. L. Shuck, Wm. Mylne, Chiles Davenport, Royster, Johnson, Allgood, and Horner. The names of others have dropped out of my memory. But the number soon increased. The first superintendent of the farm and garden was Joseph Barnard, but he proved utterly unsuitable, and afterwards fell into disgrace. The next year I was compelled by circumstances to take the farm and boarding-house, and found each a great burden. My first blunder in farming was to kill a field of young corn by placing at the roots of each stalk a handful of salt from a fish barrel; but I made \$300 for the common fund by selling ice. The next year Jesse F. Keesee rented the farm and kept the boarding-house on stipulated terms, but from the low price which the trustees insisted on fixing for board, we had new trouble by the discontent of the boarders. About this time the cholera broke out in Richmond, and we had great difficulty in keeping the boys from bolting for home. As the classes became larger and more numerous, the Rev. Eli Ball, who lived near us and preached to neighboring churches, was chosen as assistant teacher. But his ideas of education inclined him to take "short cuts" for advancing the young men, and this, together with a thirst for more evangelical labors, caused him, after one year, to resign his office. Mr. Caleb Burnley,

of Culpeper, was his successor, and proved to be a genial companion and an efficient tutor. Mainly from the influence of the godly students, both Mr. Keesee and himself became professors of religion while sojourning at the Seminary, and brought forth in all their subsequent lives the fruits of holiness.*

With few exceptions the early pupils were very little advanced. I found a small class in the Greek Testament, which Mr. Baptist had begun; but most of them were rudimentary in all the branches. One of the most useful and inexpensive methods of instruction adopted was that, at our meals, questions were proposed that would turn the conversation into channels of usefulness. The boys, like most other youths that enter our academies, were painfully deficient in orthography. Words were, therefore, given out to be spelled, and passed around till all had mastered them, never to be forgotten. It was here that I first heard *phonetic spelling* practically illustrated. One of the boys, who afterwards became somewhat distinguished for literary attainments, told me, that up to that time he had never known that there was, or could be, more than one way to spell a word, and that was the *shortest*. This was said in all simplicity; but since that period systematic efforts have been put forth to render this method popular. Of all the schemes to mar and degrade our beautiful tongue, none have appeared to me so contemptible as that which proposes to spell our words as they are pronounced. In a derived, composite language, like ours, words have a genealogy, which is crystallized in the spelling, and not in the ever-varying pronunciation. If, therefore, you change the spelling so as to conform it to the pronunciation, you take away the very elements that show its descent and distinguish it from other words of the same sound, but of different sense. The word *plumb*, for example, by its silent *b*, shows its origin from *plumbus*—lead—and not only explains its meaning, but separates it from *plum*—a *fruit*. It is precisely so with a large percentage of our words. The very term “phonetic” spelled with an “f” would excite the derision of every classical scholar. Will not *you*, then, the cultured gentlemen, that are soon to go forth

*The following is a list of teachers employed before the Seminary was changed to a College: R. Ryland, Eli Ball, Caleb Burnley, William F. Nelson, Richard A. Claybrook, F. W. Berryman, Elias Dodson, J. G. Barker, J. S. Walthall, James C. Clopton.

from these halls of learning, set your faces against such a profanation of your mother tongue. From spelling we advanced to orthography, to grammar, to etymology, to history, and even to simple Bible exegesis. These were our table talks.

All the students were then candidates for the ministry, and with only one painful exception, exhibited a truly Christian spirit. They paid no tuition-fees, and most of them received their board on a written pledge that, as soon as Providence should enable them to do so, they would refund, without interest, what it had cost the Society. If any of them should go on a foreign mission they would be released even from this obligation. Such being the financial aspect of things, it became evident that funds would soon be needed to sustain two teachers and to supply food, light, washing, fuel and furniture to a growing number of boarders.

The Education Society had not been long formed, and its appeals for aid did not meet with very prompt and liberal responses. The good people then, as now, had "many calls," and some of them were even prejudiced against educating the ministry. The Rev. James B. Taylor, then pastor of the Second Baptist Church, was the only man who volunteered to travel occasionally among the churches, and gratuitously collect funds to keep up the undertaking. The venerable John Kerr, of the First Church, and his successors, Isaac T. Hinton and J. B. Jeter, possessed qualifications for other kinds of usefulness than the gathering of means for benevolent uses. The vital question was thus forced upon us—how to meet these growing expenses? Inasmuch as the studies of the young preachers were not yet theological, but purely literary, the Education Society determined to admit *pay-students*, who had no reference to the ministry, and hoped from this source to derive an income adequate to their necessities. And it is a noteworthy fact, that for the whole period preceding the effort to secure an endowment for the College that afterwards grew out of the Seminary, the only source of revenue to meet the cost of teaching was the tuition-fees of this paying class of students. All the contributions to the Society were exhausted by the payment of the board of the beneficiaries. The salaries of the teachers, who had increased to three and then to four, were wholly dependent on the tuition-fees of the literary students. It is true that they were amusingly small, but the doctrine had not then been propagated, that

a man is nothing worth who will consent to work for less than \$500 a year. What we lacked in pay we made up in work. Without any concert or design, we fell into the long-established custom of the world—that, as the duties of an office become heavy, its emoluments are light, and *vice versa*. The railroad president gets \$10,000, or more, and rides in a Pullman train, with his family, to see after his business; the engineer grimes his person and hazards his life for \$3 or \$4 a day. An ambassador to England receives \$18,000 per annum, with an outfit, and his office is often well-nigh a sinecure; a country school-master, of equal erudition, is thankful for an income of a thousand. A city pastor of a wealthy church, which had been built up by the labors of others, exults in a stipend of \$5,000 or more, and is honored with a summer vacation of two or three months; a pastor of a rural church, of equal ability, rides through the cold of winter, works hard all the summer, and is contented with \$500 or \$800 a year.

After we had remained about two and a half years at the farm, the Society purchased, in June, 1834, "Columbia," the property of Mrs. Clara Haxall and others, for about \$12,000, and, selling the farm without pecuniary sacrifice, removed the institution to the site now occupied by the College. This was really an onward stride to respectability and usefulness. It brought us nearer to market, nearer to the post-office, nearer to medical aid, nearer to the book-stores, and nearer to spiritual privileges. To a group of pedestrians, and to a family scarcely able to own a vehicle, this move was quite agreeable. We left the plain farm-house and the slab-covered log-cabins that had been improvised as the students increased, and the unsightly barn that had served for a chapel and school-rooms, and went into apartments every way more commodious. We had a material increase of pupils, and a consequent addition to the corps of teachers. Attendance on public worship was far more frequent and profitable. God shed on the enterprise his rich blessing in the form of several precious revivals of religion, in which the godly students were the main instruments of blessing to their irreligious companions. But the manual labor policy was still adhered to. The methods of teaching were the same, only enlarged and diversified; and the institution was still called the Virginia Baptist Seminary.

The next subject that came up for consideration was the method of securing a legal title to the valuable property which had been acquired. Up to this time, the only tenure by which it was held was that it was deeded to trustees chosen by the Society, and held for its benefit. But as the Society was not incorporated, its trustees, acting in their individual capacity, could not prevent the property from descending, at their death, to their own legal heirs. It was, therefore, necessary for these trustees to become a body corporate and recognized by the law. Yet the Legislature of Virginia was unwilling to incorporate any company that proposed to teach theology. The Theological School, near Alexandria, under Episcopal auspices, joined us in applying for a charter, and both were rejected. The only alternatives were to change the Seminary to a College, leaving out the class in theology, which had meanwhile been inaugurated, or to seek a charter from another State. The Episcopal Church had a Convention located in the city of New York and incorporated by the State Legislature, and it was believed that by deeding their Seminary to the Convention, the title would be secured permanently to the church. But the church polity of the Baptists forbade their having a central organization extending its sway over the Union, and holding the property of the whole denomination. It was, therefore, left for us to throw aside the theological feature and ask to be incorporated as a purely literary institution. Providentially, this plan fell in with the prepossessions of a very large class of our people. They thought that preachers should first have their minds trained by studying all the branches of secular knowledge, and then bring those minds, unfettered, to the study of the Holy Scriptures. Another class, not objecting to theological schools and special instruction in Biblical truth, believed that if a young man could not obtain both a literary and a theological education, he should by all means prefer the former, and then make the latter the object of his life-time pursuit. His secular learning is thus made an instrument and a preparation for acquiring divine truth during his whole future life. After long and patient observation, I have come to the conclusion that this is the wiser course. Seek to be tutored by ripe scholars in both the human and divine realms of thought; but if you cannot accomplish both, take the College course first and thenceforward give yourselves to the study of the Bible.

Influenced by the causes just recited, the Society obtained from the Legislature of Virginia, March 4, 1840, an act incorporating a number of selected gentlemen with the title of *The Trustees of Richmond College*. To this chartered body was then transferred all the property of the Education Society held by its trustees. Inasmuch as the Education Society was afterwards merged into the Baptist General Association of Virginia and its duties committed to the Education Board of that body, it was thought by the best legal counsel to be advisable to obtain from the Legislature an act declaring the Education Board to be the legal successor of the Education Society. This has been done by the skill and energy of the present Financial Secretary, and the title to the College has been made as sure to the Baptists as human forethought can make it. But it is a Baptist College in no narrow, bigoted sense. Pupils of every creed and of no creed have been, and will be, received on the same terms, and treated with equal justice and consideration. Even professors have been, and will be, chosen without prejudice on account of variant religious affinities. We have founded the College primarily for the elevation of our own ministry and people, and secondarily for the improvement of the whole country.

Although the act of incorporation and the transfer of the property occurred as early as 1840, we did not begin at once to discharge the functions of a College. We had not a Faculty sufficient to conduct classes through a full course. Adhering to our policy, we carried them as far as we could, and encouraged them to complete their course elsewhere.

In the meantime the steady increase of patronage was daily showing the urgent need of more buildings. In 1855, acting under the sanction of the trustees, I borrowed, at six per cent, mostly from personal friends, the sum of \$9,220.10, as an incipient building fund, having previously obtained from Mr. Tefft, an architect, plans and specifications, under which the north wing of the present edifice was erected. My books show that on the 26th of May of the same year I paid Woodward & Minter \$1,920.75 as the first instalment on the work, and on the 15th of June \$1,933.25 as the second instalment, and the balance to the treasurer on the 20th of June, 1855. This promptness shows how urgently we needed room to accommodate the increasing students. My impression is that in

the following October, they entered their new quarters. I need not assure you that this was the second great stride to success. The Faculty had already received an accession not only to its numbers, but to its scholarship and efficiency; and we had enlarged our course of studies to the ordinary College curriculum. Our first Commencement occurred on the — of September, 1849, when two now distinguished gentlemen, Josiah Ryland and P. S. Henson, received their diplomas.*

The subject of a permanent endowment fund had been exercising the minds of its friends since its change from a Seminary to a College. One individual had spent his leisure days in visiting the churches and gathering small sums from the well-disposed. He acknowledged these contributions in the *Religious Herald* over the signature of the treasurer, and has the names of the donors still in his possession. These little amounts had reached the sum of about \$10,000, when more systematic efforts began to be put forth. We employed brethren Finch and Pollard, who added somewhat to the fund. Littlebury W. Allen combined evangelical labors with his solicitations of funds for the College, and in both respects was very successful. His agency was the ostensible means of developing his talent for great usefulness in the ministry. He added a number of believers to the churches, and no insignificant sum to the endowment. But A. M. Poindexter was the most efficient agent we ever had in this work. His name is so linked with the cause of education, in this regard, that it will go down with the College to the latest posterity. If any criticism of his methods be allowable, it would be that he sometimes pressed men of yielding natures to a degree of promised liberality which they afterwards found themselves unable to practice. Some of his subscriptions were never collected, let us hope, to the sincere regret of the subscribers. S. A. Creath was for some time an effective agent. The endowment had

*The diplomas were awarded to them on the 14th of June, 1849; but a case of cholera having occurred among the College servants about that time, and the disease being thought to be on the increase in the city, the session was prematurely closed and the Commencement postponed to September. The students presented a request to the trustees to close the session immediately. This being "respectfully declined," they were called home generally by their parents. No notice was taken of this event by the recording secretary. [See Record, Vol. I, pp. 31, 32, 33.]

reached \$100,000 at the opening of the war, and was, with the tuition fees, supporting moderately a Faculty of six professors and one tutor, the number of students averaging about one hundred and twenty. The war, *bellum horrendum*, suspended our operations, scattered the pupils, thréw the teachers out of employment, ruined the library and apparatus, defaced the buildings, and destroyed most of the endowment!

While my Seminary and College life was, in the main, pleasant, yet I encountered difficulties which no one without experience can fully appreciate. One of the pleasures was the *sportiveness* of the boys. At the beginning of each session they had a so-called *Secret Club*, into which the "greenhorns" were inducted, with great solemnity, every Saturday night. After very sober preliminaries and a solemn pledge of secrecy, etc., etc., they closed the grave exercises of the evening by inviting the novitiate to occupy the "chair of honor" between the President and Vice-President, and he sat down, with great complacency, on a richly-embroidered chair, to find himself in a *tub of cold water*!

Near the close of the session they had a custom of giving the *ugliest boy* at College a pair of *ten-dollar boots*. I noticed, however, that if any student was thought to admire himself too much, they were apt to elect him to this honor. So with much glee the election was conducted, and on the appointed afternoon the orator who gave and the orator who received the gift regaled an audience of young people with unique eloquence. I recall vividly a sentence in a speech of one of these humorous occasions—"that beauty is only skin deep, while ugliness goes down to the bone." Thankful that the foolish custom of *hazing* had not then found its way into our colleges—and I trust never will into our Southern institutions—I confess that these pleasantries did sometimes smooth the wrinkles from my brow.

The first difficulty was to keep the "boys" from taking charge of churches while yet at school. During vacations, supplying vacant pulpits, colportage, protracted meetings, etc., were all well suited to young men looking forward to the ministry. These things I joyfully encouraged; but in the brief term of nine months the professors ought to give, and do give, a youth as much to do as will absorb all his energies. And if he has a sermon to prepare, and a

journey to make, that takes something from the end of one week and the beginning of another, if he begins his work on Monday wearied by the toils, or excited by the privileges, of the past day, and labors all the week with his attention divided between college duties and church duties, he *must be damaged* in his main interest—*his studies*. If he does not neglect these, he acquires a habit of preaching without preparation, which hurts him through life.

Another difficulty was that promising young men were hard to keep at school till they finished their course of study. After toiling with them, becoming interested in them, seeing their defects and yet knowing their possibilities, how I hated to have them stop short in the middle! Some destitute church, some tempting salary, some flattering old woman, or some charming young woman, has often outweighed all my arguments and made me feel that my labors had been relatively lost. It may seem unwise to detain a warm-hearted youth two or three years from active service, but later on in life he will be worth more to the cause of truth by having tarried at Jericho than the cause of truth gained by his not tarrying at first. Other things being equal, the most thorough preparation that the mind can receive is the wisest policy, both for the young preachers and for the churches. One giant is worth a hundred pigmies.

Another difficulty grew out of my lack of power to inspire my coadjutors with enthusiasm in our work. I felt it myself in its consuming energy. It kept me awake many a lonely hour of night; but I could not kindle it in others. When studying some College problem, I often called on my special friend, J. B. Jeter, for consultation. He had a vigorous intellect, but I could seldom bring it to bear on the question before me. In the midst of my efforts to enlist his attention, he would spring some inquiry about the First Baptist Church, of the city, of which he was pastor, and switch me off my track in spite of me. There were other trustees that showed their want of sympathy in a different way. The College was young, and poor, and ungainly in aspect. To be a trustee was no honor and often a drag. The session may have just closed. Some measure was to be adopted of great importance to the next session. Not a wheel could turn till that matter had been ad-

justed. A meeting was called, advertised in the city papers, and announced from the Baptist pulpits. I often rode over the city in the hot sun to *remind* the members of the time, place, and necessity of the meeting, and when the hour arrived *a quorum was not present*. This was most disheartening. We even had to appoint a standing committee to transact necessary business in the absence of a quorum, and then get the full Board to sanction it afterwards. On one occasion, a professor was to be elected, and I was requested to advertise and correspond on the subject. There were, of course, many applicants. After mature inquiry, I made up my mind that a young man who had graduated with the first honors of a large Princeton class, and, having married a Virginia wife, was then living in Virginia, was the man for the place. A southernized northerner is generally good timber to build with. After I had stated all these and other grounds for my conviction, a trustee rose to recommend a personal friend of his—"a Virginia gentleman"—and he was elected by a large majority. The young gentleman rejected has long been distinguished as the President of Columbian University, in Washington city. The interest of a college should never be sacrificed on the altar of private friendship.

Another difficulty was that I had too much to do, to do anything well. From the beginning of 1834 to the close of 1841, I was compelled, by the want of room for a steward's family, to keep the boarding department. This involved a vast amount of anxiety to myself and family. I also collected the tuition fees, and paid the professors' salaries, rendering to the Board of Trustees annual accounts of these transactions. But many a time the money was not in hand to meet these claims, and *somebody* had to advance it, or to have the College stigmatized as faithless to its promises. But this was not all. Besides my full share of teaching, and all the outside College business, the maintenance of discipline was exceedingly embarrassing. The professors, often young men, were at first slow to touch this delicate branch of duty, and you may guess on whom its odium fell. Afterwards, the Faculty did assume their just authority, but as the youngest, or last elected member, had the same vote that the president had, his methods were often set aside by a majority vote, and he was held responsible by the public for proceedings which he had tried

in vain to prevent. By a failure on the part of the trustees, at an early day, to define accurately the duties and rights of the president, the Faculty meetings, held once a week, became to me an intolerable bore. One man can sometimes do a thing better than a dozen men of superior talents can do it. While each professor should be supreme in his own department, the president ought to be supreme in the general management of a college, or not be held accountable for its mismanagement. Moreover, a great part of discipline consists in private admonition. It was a cherished principle with me that if a youth was *habitually indolent*, he should be kindly but honestly informed, that, without a change for the better, his father would be requested to take him home. To wait for some overt crime, and then expel him, is cruel. No college has a right to retain a pupil who is not receiving a fair equivalent for his money. Millions are annually wasted, and thousands of young men ruined, by a disregard of this rule.

"But why did you take charge of the African church if you had too much to do?"* Answer: It was generally thought by the most prudent friends of the Baptist cause in Richmond that I should occupy the position. It kept me from going into the country to preach, and thus being absent from the College and family. Most of the duties were to be discharged on Sunday. A change of labors is a good way of resting. I had vowed to God years before to preach the gospel *whenever, wherever*, and to *whomsoever* a door should be opened. The field promised great usefulness. I esteemed it a holy privilege to preach the gospel to the poor; and while the negroes were in bondage and forbidden by law to have colored ministers, and even to assemble by themselves for worship, I felt that it would be an awful crime for any white preacher to decline such an opportunity. But the chronic difficulty was the wise administration of the boarding department. During the eight years of my control this was a prolific source of trouble with the students. Their sickness filled me with anxiety. Occasional deaths overwhelmed me with grief. Sub-stewards were then tried—*i. e.*, I managed the finances and they attended to the details. This plan had its defects, many delicate questions coming up for solution. It was harder to

*The First African Baptist Church of Richmond was organized about 1841, and President Ryland was requested to assume the pastoral office.—C. H. R.

find a suitable caterer than to fill a professor's chair. Finally, in the fall of '56, we opened two hotels—one to be occupied by Mr. Tyler, followed by Mr. Brock, and the other by Mr. Lindsay. The terms of board were fixed, but each was to collect his own bills, and the competition kept up the fare. I paid the board bills of the young ministers as fast as the funds came in from collectors. This plan of hotels worked out a grateful quietude.

I confess two blunders which I urged the trustees to commit in the administration of College affairs. One was the manufacture of gas. The pipes had already been fixed in the main building, but the city gas company refused to extend its ground pipes so far out, except on exorbitant terms. So we succeeded, after much trouble and expense, in building our works and making (of pine wood) excellent gas; but we found an unexpected difficulty in its distribution. If each room had its meter, the expense, though less than that of the city gas, was not satisfactory to the consumers, and they clamored for their old cheap lamps. If the gas was turned on the whole building, to be used at the discretion of its occupants, so much was consumed as to inflict a heavy burden on the College. A gay young gentleman would light up his room to the utmost capacity of his burner, and go out to spend the evening. The brightness of his room was to be positive proof that he was hard at work. To avoid needless waste we had to turn off the gas at a fixed hour—11 o'clock—and this caused discontent. Thus rigid economy on the one hand, and wanton extravagance on the other, finally compelled us to dispose of the gas works at a heavy loss, and, giving up our beautiful light, to return to the miserable old lamps!

The second blunder was to urge the trustees to purchase Confederate States bonds for investment. Alexander H. Stephens had said, if the Confederacy should succeed, these bonds would be the best endowment we could get, and if it should fail, everything would go to wreck. I know not how far my counsel influenced the Board, but I confess that my firm conviction of the justice of our cause and my strong hope of its ultimate triumph induced me to invest my own means in the bonds, and to advise and to urge the trustees to the same policy. If any of them voted in one way for the College and acted in another way for them-

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